by Saket Sharma

EMRS TGT librarian Tier 2

Part VI: Library Users

Copyright Page

Copyright © 2025 – **Saket Sharma**
All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, scanning, or otherwise—without the prior written permission of the author/publisher, except as permitted under **Section 52 of the Indian Copyright Act, 1957**, for purposes of fair use such as review, research, criticism, or academic reference.

This publication has been prepared exclusively for **academic and educational purposes** and **covers EMRS TGT Librarian Tier 2 – Part VI: Library Users**, in accordance with the prescribed syllabus. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, organization, and syllabus alignment, the syllabus and examination framework remain the intellectual property of the **National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), Government of India**.

Disclaimer

This book is an **independent academic resource** intended to assist candidates preparing for **EMRS TGT Librarian Tier 2 (Part VI: Library Users)** and other Library and Information Science (LIS) examinations. It is **not an official publication** of NESTS, EMRS, or the Ministry of Education, Government of India. Candidates are advised to consult official notifications and documents for authoritative information.

License

This work is licensed under the **Creative Commons Attribution–NonCommercial–ShareAlike 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)**.
You are free to share and adapt the material for **non-commercial purposes**, provided appropriate credit is given to the author and any derivative works are distributed under the same license. **Commercial use is strictly prohibited** without prior written permission of the author.

Author & Designer: Saket Sharma
Edition: First Edition
Year of Publication: 2025
Release Date: 24 October 2025
Printed & Published by: Saket Sharma
Place of Publication: New Delhi, India

To Connect

Website: www.saketsharma.com
Telegram Channel: https://t.me/UGCNETJRF2024JUNE
LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/in/saket-sharma-3362b7b5/
WhatsApp Channel: https://whatsapp.com/channel/0029Vatnly48KMqf9x3wbp04
MCQ Portal: https://www.saketsharma.com/meg-portal

Contents

Unit 1. Techniques of Library and Information Centres Survey. 5

1.1 Concept Overview 5

1.2 Groups Involved in Online User Education 5

1.3 Orientation and Instruction 6

1.4 Main Goals of Online User Education 6

1.5 Methods of Online User Education 7

1.6 Factors Affecting Choice of Teaching Methods 7

1.7 Proforma Method 8

1.8 Interview Method 8

1.9 Records Analysis Method 9

Unit.2. Information users and their information Needs 10

2.1 Concept of Library Users 10

2.2 Categorization of Users According to S. R. Ranganathan 10

2.3 Library Services Suggested by Ranganathan 11

2.4 Categorization of Users According to Whittaker 12

2.5 Categorization of Users According to Werner Kunz 13

2.6 Teachers 15

2.7 Scientists 16

2.8 Professionals 16

2.9 Policy Makers and Planners 16

2.10 Intermediaries and Communicators 17

2.11 Visiting Scholars 17

2.12 Administrative Staff 18

2.13 Legislators 18

2.15 Information Needs of Users 19

2.16 Information Seeking 22

2.17 Information Seeking Behavior 23

2.18 Information Seeking Behavior Models 26

2.19 Wilson's Models of Information Seeking Behavior 30

2.20 Dervin's Sense-Making Model 31

2.21 Ellis's Model of Information Seeking Behavior 32

2.22 Kuhlthau's Model of Information Seeking Behavior 33

2.23 Nature of Information Seeking Behavior 33

Unit.3 User Education 35

3.1 User Education 35
3.2 Definition of User Education 35
3.3 Scope and Nature of User Education 36
3.4 Components of User Education 36
3.4.2 Instruction (Bibliographic Instruction) 37
3.5 Practical Aspects of User Education 37
3.6 Course-Integrated User Education 37
3.7 Development of User Education 38
3.8 Evaluation of a User Education Programme 42
3.9 User Education Techniques and Methods 45
Unit. 4. User Studies 50
4.1 Methods and Techniques of Use Studies 50
4.2 General or Conventional Methods 50
4.3 Indirect Methods 50
4.4 Special and Unconventional Methods 51
4.5 Classification Based on Library Type 51
4.6 Classification Based on Orientation of Study 51
4.7 Questionnaire Method 52
4.8 Interview Method 52
4.9 Diary Study Method 53
4.10 Observation and Field Study 53
4.11 Analysis of Library Records 54
4.12 Computer Feedback 54
4.13 Citation Analysis 55
4.14 Analysis of Computer Records 56
4.15 Internet Browsing Pattern Analysis 56
4.16 Other Techniques of Use Studies 57
4.17 How to Conduct a Use Study 61
4.23 Conceptual Background of User Studies 62
4.24 Limitations of Use and User Studies 63
4.25 Early Focus of User Studies (Before 1930s) 64
4.26 User Studies in the 1930s 64
4.27 User Studies in the 1940s 64
4.28 User Studies in the 1950s 64
4.30 User Studies in the 1970s 65

4.31 User Studies in the 1980s 65
4.32 User Studies in the 1990s 65
4.33 User Studies in the 2000s 66
Unit 5. User Orientation Programmes 67
5.1 User Orientation in Libraries 67
5.2 Meaning and Definition of User Orientation 67
5.3 Importance of User Orientation 68
5.4 Role of Libraries and Policy Support 68
5.5 Librarian as Educator 69
5.6 Nature and Scope of User Orientation 69
5.8 Need for User Education 70
5.9 Objectives of User Education 72
5.10 Library Orientation 73
5.11 Process of Library Orientation 73
5.12 Methods and Media of User Orientation 73
5.13 Different Levels of User Orientation 74
5.14 User Orientation in Different Libraries 74
5.16 User Orientation in a University / College Library 78
5.17 Conventional and Modern Techniques of User Orientation 82

Unit 1. Techniques of Library and Information Centres Survey.

User Education

1.1 Concept Overview

Information Technology has brought a major shift in user education by enabling computer-based and online information retrieval. Libraries and information centres increasingly depend on electronic databases and telecommunication networks to provide fast, accurate, and remote access to information. Proper user education is essential for effective use of these systems.

Key Points

- Shift from manual to computerized information retrieval
- Rapid expansion of online databases
- Network-based access from local terminals
- Strong link between IT use and user education
- Need for systematic training of users

Examples

- Online bibliographic searching in university libraries
- Use of MEDLINE for medical information
- Chemical research through Chemical Abstracts
- Remote database access via library networks
- Institutional digital repositories
- Online Public Access Catalogues (OPACs)
- Web-based indexing and abstracting services

1.2 Groups Involved in Online User Education

Several groups are involved in planning and implementing online user education programmes. Each group has different roles and motivations, often connected with system promotion, service efficiency, or professional competence.

Groups

- Database producers
- System operators
- Libraries and information centres
- Library schools
- Intermediaries
- End users

Examples

- Database producers supplying training manuals

- System operators offering system-specific instruction
- Libraries conducting user orientation programmes
- Library schools teaching online searching skills
- Intermediaries performing expert searches
- End users conducting independent searches
- Vendors providing trial and demonstration access

1.3 Orientation and Instruction

Online education programmes are broadly divided into orientation and instruction, both of which are essential for effective learning.

Orientation

- Introduces the existence of online information systems
- Creates awareness of available databases and services

Instruction

- Develops detailed searching and operational skills
- Focuses on effective use of online retrieval systems

Examples

- Introductory lectures on online databases
- Demonstrations of search interfaces
- Training in Boolean logic
- Instruction in database-specific commands
- Learning search limits and filters
- Guided practice sessions
- Search strategy development exercises

1.4 Main Goals of Online User Education

The goals of online user education are designed to meet the needs of both end users and intermediaries, ensuring effective and efficient information retrieval.

Goals

- Enable end users to perform subject-based searches
- Enable intermediaries to search across multiple disciplines
- Encourage independent and confident system use
- Improve relevance and precision of search results

Examples

- Researchers retrieving journal articles independently

- Students searching theses and dissertations
- Librarians handling multidisciplinary queries
- Intermediaries supporting faculty research
- On-demand information searching
- Preparation of literature reviews
- Support for evidence-based decision making

1.5 Methods of Online User Education

As online information retrieval is interactive in nature, training methods emphasize practical experience. The concept of learning by doing plays a central role.

Key Methods

- Live online searching
- Hands-on practice on real systems
- Observation under trained searchers
- Use of interactive help features
- Guided demonstrations and tutorials

Examples

- Practicing searches on live databases
- Using built-in help during MEDLINE searches
- Observing expert intermediaries
- Conducting trial and simulated searches
- Selecting databases using DBI tools
- Responding to interactive system prompts
- Group-based practical training sessions

1.6 Factors Affecting Choice of Teaching Methods

The selection of appropriate teaching methods depends on both educational outcomes and practical constraints.

Factors

- Availability of computer terminals
- Cost of online database usage
- Network and telecommunication facilities
- Skill level of users
- Institutional infrastructure and support

Examples

- Group demonstrations due to limited terminals
- Restricted live practice because of high access costs
- Use of offline tutorials where connectivity is weak
- Self-paced learning for advanced users
- Guided workshops for beginners
- Vendor-supported training programmes

1.7 Proforma Method

The proforma method is a structured data collection technique in which information is gathered using a pre-designed form containing specific questions or fields. It ensures uniformity, comparability, and ease of analysis, especially in user studies and information use surveys.

Key Points

- Uses a standardized and pre-tested format
- Suitable for collecting large-scale quantitative data
- Reduces ambiguity in responses
- Easy to tabulate and analyze
- Commonly used in libraries and information centres

Examples

- Library user satisfaction survey forms
- Reader registration and feedback proformas
- Information needs assessment forms
- Evaluation forms for online database training
- Circulation statistics collection sheets
- Reference service assessment forms
- User education programme evaluation proformas

1.8 Interview Method

The interview method involves direct verbal interaction between the investigator and the user to collect detailed and qualitative information. It is particularly useful for understanding user behaviour, attitudes, and problems in information use.

Key Points

- Can be structured, semi-structured, or unstructured
- Allows in-depth understanding of user needs
- Flexible and interactive method
- Suitable for small and focused user groups

- Time-consuming but highly informative

Examples

- Interviewing researchers about database usage
- Faculty interviews on information-seeking behaviour
- Student interviews for library service improvement
- User interviews on problems in online searching
- Librarian-user interviews during reference service
- Needs assessment interviews before system design

1.9 Records Analysis Method

The records analysis method involves the systematic examination of existing records maintained by libraries or information systems to study patterns of information use without direct user interaction.

Key Points

- Based on already available data
- Economical and non-intrusive method
- Useful for trend and usage analysis
- Reflects actual user behaviour
- Limited to recorded variables only

Examples

- Analysis of circulation records
- OPAC search log analysis
- Database usage statistics review
- Reference query registers
- Interlibrary loan request analysis
- E-resource access logs
- Attendance records of user education programmes

Unit.2. Information users and their information Needs

Categories of Users

2.1 Concept of Library Users

The basic purpose of visiting a library remains largely the same across different types of libraries, that is, seeking information and knowledge. However, users differ in their characteristics, background, and information needs depending on the type of library. Academic and special libraries usually serve homogeneous user groups, whereas public libraries serve heterogeneous user groups.

Key Points

- User characteristics vary by type of library
- Academic and special library users are more homogeneous
- Public library users are diverse in nature
- Users are categorized based on education, intellect, and information needs
- User categorization helps in planning effective library services

Examples

- Students using academic libraries for coursework
- Teachers consulting reference materials
- Researchers seeking scholarly literature
- Scientists using specialized databases
- Engineers accessing technical standards
- Doctors consulting medical journals
- Managers using business information
- Administrators seeking policy documents

2.2 Categorization of Users According to S. R. Ranganathan

S. R. Ranganathan categorized library users based on the types of library services required by them. This classification helps librarians design suitable services for different user groups.

2.2.1 Categories of Users

i. Fresher

A fresher is a new member of the library who needs initiation into library use and services.

Examples

- First-year college students
- Newly enrolled research scholars
- New employees in an organization
- First-time public library members
- Users unfamiliar with library rules

ii. Ordinary Reader
An ordinary reader demands general books and routine library services.

Examples

- Readers borrowing novels
- Users reading newspapers
- Casual readers of magazines
- Users seeking popular literature
- General knowledge seekers

iii. Specialist Reader
A specialist reader focuses on a narrow subject area and usually requires advanced and research-oriented services.

Examples

- Researchers in a specific discipline
- Scientists working on a project
- Doctoral scholars
- Subject experts
- Faculty members in specialized fields

iv. General Reader
This group includes users who do not clearly fall into any other category.

Examples

- Occasional library visitors
- Users with mixed reading interests
- Browsers without a specific subject focus
- Recreational readers
- Community members using library space

2.3 Library Services Suggested by Ranganathan

To meet the needs of the four categories of users, Ranganathan suggested different types of services.

Types of Services

- Initiation or Orientation
- Ready Reference or Short-Range Reference Service
- Long Range Reference Service
- General Help to General Users

Examples

- Orientation programmes for freshers
- Quick reference answers for ordinary readers
- Detailed literature searches for specialists
- General assistance for casual users
- User guidance at reference desks
- Help in locating books and documents

2.4 Categorization of Users According to Whittaker

Whittaker classified users based on the **library services and materials** they generally use.

2.4.1 Categories of Users

i. General Readers
These users mainly use light and recreational reading materials.

Examples

- Readers of fiction and short stories
- Magazine readers
- Newspaper readers
- Leisure reading users
- Casual library visitors

ii. Subject Readers
These users focus on materials related to a particular subject area.

Examples

- Students studying a specific subject
- Faculty members in a discipline
- Researchers in a field
- Users preparing for examinations
- Professionals updating subject knowledge

iii. Special Readers
These users have special information needs and require special services.

Examples

- Visually impaired users
- Physically challenged readers
- Users requiring assistive technologies
- Senior citizens with special needs
- Users needing customized services

iv. Non-Reading Users
These users utilize library resources other than traditional reading materials.

Examples

- Users borrowing audio recordings
- Video and multimedia users
- Users accessing digital content
- Library visitors using computers only
- Users attending library events

2.5 Categorization of Users According to Werner Kunz

Werner Kunz categorized users based on their **approach to information use** rather than library type or service.

2.5.1 Categories of Users

i. Potential User
A potential user needs information but may not clearly express the requirement.

Examples

- New researchers unsure of information needs
- Students lacking search skills
- Users unfamiliar with information sources
- First-time database users
- Inexperienced library users

ii. Expected User
An expected user is known to intend to use specific information services.

Examples

- Students registered for database training
- Faculty members planning research
- Users requesting future information support
- Researchers enrolled in projects
- Users scheduled for reference assistance

iii. Actual User
An actual user has used information services, irrespective of the benefit gained.

Examples

- Users conducting online searches
- Borrowers of library materials
- Users accessing e-resources

- Visitors using reference services
- Participants in user education programmes

iv. Beneficiary User
A beneficiary user derives measurable benefit from information services.

Examples

- Researchers publishing papers using library resources
- Students achieving academic success
- Professionals making informed decisions
- Scientists completing research projects
- Users solving problems using retrieved information

2.2.4 Categorization of Users According to Prof. J. D. Bernal

Prof. J. D. Bernal grouped information users mainly on the basis of their information needs, work roles, and intensity of information use. This approach highlights that different categories of users demand different levels, formats, and depth of information services. Apart from the broad groupings, several specific user categories frequently visit libraries and seek advanced and demanding information services depending on the type of library.

2.3 Students

Students constitute the largest category of users in academic libraries, including school, college, and university libraries. In higher education institutions, this group includes undergraduates, postgraduates, M.Phil., and research scholars.

Characteristics

- Information needs are curriculum-oriented
- Depend heavily on prescribed textbooks
- Limited exploration beyond reading lists in early stages
- Require guidance in effective library use

Examples

- Undergraduate students using textbooks and lecture notes
- First-year students needing orientation and guidance
- Students consulting reserve sections
- Users accessing examination-related materials
- Students using library spaces for study

2.4 Postgraduate Students

Postgraduate students have comparatively greater experience in library use and show deeper engagement with subject literature.

Characteristics

- Need both textbooks and supplementary materials
- Expected to read beyond prescribed texts
- Greater use of journals and periodicals
- Interest in both academic and general reading

Examples

- Use of current journals for assignments
- Searching recent research articles
- Consulting reference sources
- Reading biographies and general knowledge books
- Using electronic resources for coursework

2.5 Research Students

Research students include M.Phil. and Ph.D. scholars engaged in original research and knowledge creation.

Characteristics

- Need advanced and specialized information
- Heavy use of abstracting and indexing services
- Depend on both print and electronic resources
- Require continuous current awareness

Examples

- Use of bibliographic databases
- Consulting government publications
- Accessing research reports and theses
- Using serial publications
- Searching CD-ROMs, databases, and databanks

2.6 Teachers

Teachers form a core user group in academic libraries, combining both teaching and research responsibilities.

Characteristics

- Require comprehensive information coverage
- Use information for teaching and research
- Differ in needs across humanities, social sciences, and sciences
- Demand current and micro-level information

Examples

- Humanities faculty consulting monographs

- Social science teachers using reports and data
- Science faculty accessing databases and journals
- Faculty using current awareness services
- Participation in resource-sharing networks

2.7 Scientists

Scientists and engineers are major users of **scientific and technological information**, working in academic or industrial research environments.

Characteristics

- Need effective communication of information
- Depend on factual, current, and retrospective information
- Use information at different stages of research

Examples

- Keeping current with new research findings
- Seeking factual data, figures, and designs
- Conducting literature reviews for new projects
- Using standards and technical reports
- Writing and publishing research papers

2.8 Professionals

Professionals such as lawyers, judges, doctors, and engineers have time constraints but high information urgency.

Characteristics

- Require precise and up-to-date information
- Prefer information in ready-to-use formats
- Information directly impacts professional decisions

Examples

- Lawyers consulting laws and case judgments
- Judges referring to earlier verdicts
- Doctors following latest medical research
- Engineers accessing technical specifications
- Professionals using online legal and medical databases

2.9 Policy Makers and Planners

This category includes planners, administrators, managers, executives, industrialists, and development workers.

Characteristics

- Information needs linked to decision-making
- Require multidisciplinary information
- Use information for planning and problem-solving

Examples

- Policy makers using socio-economic data
- Planners consulting development reports
- Managers using financial and marketing information
- Executives accessing project planning documents
- Administrators using governance-related data

2.10 Intermediaries and Communicators

Intermediaries and extension workers play a crucial role, especially in rural and developing regions, by bridging the gap between information systems and communities.

Characteristics

- Serve populations with low literacy levels
- Need region-specific and practical information
- Act as information transmitters

Examples

- Extension workers supporting rural development
- Community information facilitators
- Agricultural and health communicators
- NGO field workers
- Social development intermediaries

2.11 Visiting Scholars

Visiting scholars and researchers from other institutions form a distinct group of information users.

Characteristics

- Seek specific materials not available elsewhere
- Require intensive reference support
- Short-term but intensive library use

Examples

- Visiting faculty consulting rare collections
- Scholars accessing specialized journals

- Researchers requesting photocopies
- Use of archival materials
- Short-term access to institutional resources

2.12 Administrative Staff

Administrative staff support academic and governmental institutions and also utilize library resources.

Characteristics

- Information needs related to office work
- Interest in rules, regulations, and procedures
- Some pursue self-improvement and education

Examples

- Staff consulting service rules
- Use of manuals and office records
- Reading newspapers and magazines
- Accessing textbooks for skill enhancement
- Reading fiction and inspirational literature

2.13 Legislators

Legislators and elected representatives are important users of library and information systems.

Characteristics

- Need current and issue-based information
- Information supports debates and policy discussions
- Time-sensitive information needs

Examples

- Use of parliamentary documents
- Consulting policy reports
- Accessing statistical data
- Reviewing social and economic issues
- Preparing for legislative discussions

2.14 Users with Special Needs

Users with special needs require inclusive and accessible library services.

Characteristics

- May have visual, physical, or other disabilities
- Require special equipment and assistance

- Need equal access to information

Examples

- Visually impaired users using Braille books
- Access to screen readers and audio books
- Wheelchair-accessible library facilities
- Staff assistance for document retrieval
- Specially designed information services

2.15 Information Needs of Users

2.15.1 Information Needs: Concept

An information system is established to satisfy the diverse and changing information needs of different categories of users. Information professionals collect, organize, and provide access to various documentary sources and also deliver specific information embedded within these documents. They additionally work to enhance information awareness among users.

The term information need was coined by Robert Taylor in 1962 to describe an individual's or group's desire to obtain specific information to satisfy a conscious requirement. Information needs vary widely depending on education, occupation, experience, time constraints, organizational context, and availability of technology.

Key Points

- Information systems exist to meet user information needs
- Information needs are conscious and purpose-oriented
- Needs differ across academic, research, and professional settings
- Basic research users rely more on documentary sources
- Applied research and management users have complex needs

Examples

- Researchers seeking scholarly literature
- Managers requiring decision-support information
- Scientists needing experimental data
- Teachers using instructional and research materials
- Students consulting textbooks and notes
- Professionals needing updated factual information

2.15.2 Characteristics of Information Needs

Information needs are not uniform and depend on several interrelated factors.

Nature of Information Needs

- Closely related to subject of interest
- Dependent on type of activity undertaken

- Influenced by the user's level of sophistication
- Related to the specific purpose at a given time

Examples

- Subject-specific information for research
- Operational information for daily tasks
- Advanced information for experts
- Introductory information for beginners
- Decision-oriented information for managers

2.15.3 Types of Information Needs

Broadly, information needs can be grouped into two major types.

Types

- Current awareness information
- Ad hoc or problem-specific information

Examples

- Keeping up with latest research trends
- Tracking recent publications in a field
- Seeking information for solving a specific problem
- Gathering data for a particular assignment
- Obtaining facts for immediate decision-making

2.15.4 Approaches to Information Needs According to Guha

Guha identified four major approaches to information needs, explaining how users seek information in different contexts.

Current Approach

Users seek up-to-date information to remain informed about new developments in their field.

Examples

- Reading current journals
- Scanning indexing and abstracting services
- Attending seminars and conferences
- Following professional updates on LinkedIn
- Sharing reprints and research updates

Everyday Approach

Users need specific factual information for routine or ongoing work.

Examples

- Consulting handbooks
- Looking up formulas or equations
- Checking equipment specifications
- Using ready reference sources
- Accessing state-of-the-art reports

Exhaustive Approach

Users seek comprehensive and detailed information, usually at the start of a new research project.

Examples

- Conducting literature reviews
- Surveying all relevant publications
- Consulting bibliographies
- Reviewing theses and dissertations
- Studying historical development of a topic

Catching-up Approach

Users seek information from related fields to update their knowledge and gain new insights.

Examples

- Exploring allied subject literature
- Discovering missed but relevant studies
- Learning recent advances outside one’s specialization
- Gaining interdisciplinary perspectives
- Generating new research ideas

2.15.5 Factors Influencing Information Needs

Information needs are shaped by multiple internal and external factors. Paisley identified several key influences.

Major Factors

- Availability of information sources
- Purpose for which information is used
- User’s background and motivation
- Social, political, and economic environment
- Consequences of information use

Examples

- Limited sources restricting information choices
- Professional goals shaping information demand
- Organizational policies influencing access
- Societal issues affecting information priorities
- Impact of information on decisions and actions

2.15.6 Assessing Information Needs

Assessment of information needs is essential for designing an efficient and responsive information system. Proper assessment enables libraries to align their collections and services with user requirements.

Purpose of Assessment

- Identify subject-wise user needs
- Decide types of documents to acquire
- Plan suitable information services
- Improve effectiveness of information delivery

Examples

- User surveys and questionnaires
- Analysis of circulation and usage data
- Feedback from reference services
- Observation of user behavior
- Consultation with faculty and researchers

2.16 Information Seeking

Information seeking refers to the process through which an individual attempts to **identify and obtain information** that satisfies a perceived or felt need. It may be carried out **actively or passively**, depending on the urgency and awareness of the need. Scholars have emphasized that information seeking is a purposeful activity aimed at reducing uncertainty and filling knowledge gaps.

Robert Wright and Guy described information seeking as an activity undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need, while Ikoja–Odongo viewed it as actions taken to satisfy a felt need. Over time, several systematic models of information seeking have been developed to explain how users locate relevant information.

Key Points

- Information seeking arises from a perceived or felt need
- It may be active or passive in nature
- It is a goal-oriented process
- Emphasis is on identifying relevant messages
- It forms the basis for information behavior studies

Examples

- Searching literature for a research topic
- Browsing journals for recent developments
- Consulting experts for clarification
- Using online databases to answer a query
- Reading reports to reduce uncertainty

2.16.1 Models of Information Seeking

Extensive research on information seeking has resulted in several influential models that explain **systematic steps** followed by users while searching for information.

Major Models

- Ellis's model of information seeking
- Wilson's models of information behavior
- Kuhlthau's information search process model

Explanation

- Ellis emphasized behavioral features such as starting, chaining, browsing, and verifying
- Wilson focused on needs, barriers, and contextual factors influencing seeking
- Kuhlthau highlighted the cognitive and emotional stages during information search

Examples

- Following citations to locate related literature
- Browsing shelves or databases
- Refining searches through feedback
- Experiencing uncertainty at early search stages
- Gaining clarity as information accumulates

2.17 Information Seeking Behavior

Information seeking behavior refers to the approach and actions adopted by users to obtain information required to satisfy a specific goal. It includes identifying possible sources, selecting appropriate channels, and using information effectively.

Case defined information seeking as a conscious effort to acquire information in response to a knowledge gap. This behavior includes generating, communicating, and seeking information through both traditional and computerized systems.

Key Points

- Driven by a goal or problem
- Includes source selection and evaluation
- Covers both formal and informal channels

- Influenced by user awareness and experience
- Central to library and information services planning

Examples

- Choosing books over journals for basic understanding
- Using databases instead of print indexes
- Consulting librarians for complex queries
- Searching the internet for quick facts
- Using institutional repositories

2.17.1 Scope of Information Seeking Behavior

Information seeking behavior encompasses all user activities related to information access and use, across different systems and formats.

Scope

- Traditional information sources
- Computerized and digital systems
- Formal and informal communication
- Individual and collaborative searching

Examples

- Use of books and periodicals
- Searching online databases
- Accessing digital libraries
- Consulting colleagues
- Participating in discussion forums

2.17.2 Importance of Studying Information Seeking Behavior

Understanding user information seeking behavior is essential for developing **effective library collections and services**. It enables information professionals to align resources with actual user needs.

Importance

- Helps in collection development
- Improves existing information services
- Supports design of new services
- Enhances user satisfaction
- Ensures effective information delivery

Examples

- Selecting relevant databases

- Designing user education programmes
- Improving reference services
- Customizing alert services
- Enhancing access tools

2.17.3 Historical Development of Information Seeking Studies

The formal study of information behavior dates back to 1948, with the Royal Society Scientific Information Conference, where researchers examined how scientists and technologists used information.

Later developments included the emergence of information science as a discipline and the establishment of professional bodies dedicated to its study.

Key Developments

- Early library use surveys
- Studies on scientists' information use
- Emergence of information science
- Growth of information behavior research

Examples

- Library surveys on user habits
- Studies of scientific communication
- Research on user needs
- Development of theoretical models
- Expansion of information science education

2.17.4 Information Seeking Behavior and Information Gathering

Researchers distinguish between **immediate information needs** and **deferred needs**.

Concepts

- Immediate needs relate to information seeking behavior
- Deferred needs relate to information gathering

Examples

- Looking up a fact for immediate use
- Collecting articles for future research
- Saving references for later reading
- Creating personal information files
- Building a knowledge base over time

2.17.5 Facets of Information Seeking

According to **T. D. Wilson**, information seeking involves multiple facets and should not be viewed only in terms of need.

Facets

- Perceived information need
- Factors influencing user response
- Processes and actions involved
- Information use outcomes

Examples

- Recognizing a gap in knowledge
- Overcoming barriers to access
- Selecting appropriate sources
- Applying information to solve problems
- Evaluating usefulness of information

2.17.6 Significance in Library and Information Services

A thorough understanding of information needs and information seeking behavior is fundamental to the success of library and information services.

Significance

- User-centered service design
- Effective resource utilization
- Better decision-making support
- Enhanced relevance of services
- Continuous improvement of systems

Examples

- Tailored reference services
- User-focused digital libraries
- Personalized alert services
- Demand-driven acquisitions
- Evidence-based library planning

2.18 Information Seeking Behavior Models

Information seeking behavior models explain the systematic steps, patterns, and influences involved when users attempt to locate and use information. Different scholars have conceptualized these steps in distinct frameworks, reflecting cognitive, social, cultural, and contextual dimensions of information behavior. These models are foundational in Library and Information Science for understanding users and for training information professionals.

2.18.1 Robert Taylor's Model of Information Seeking

Robert S. Taylor developed a seminal model in 1968 that has been particularly influential in **reference service training**. He identified four progressively refined levels of information need.

Levels

- Visceral need: a vague, unexpressed dissatisfaction
- Conscious need: an ambiguous and loosely expressed statement
- Formalized need: a clear, rational, and qualified statement
- Compromised need: a query adjusted to fit the information system

Examples

- Feeling unsure about a topic without articulation
- Asking a general question at a reference desk
- Framing a precise research question
- Translating the question into database search terms
- Modifying queries based on system constraints

2.18.2 Information Encountering – Erdelez

Sanda Erdelez introduced the concept of **information encountering** in 1995, emphasizing accidental or incidental acquisition of information during both information-related and non-information-related activities.

Key Ideas

- Information can be encountered unintentionally
- Encountering occurs in both information-rich and non-information environments
- Emotional and cognitive states change before and after encountering
- Encountered information may relate to present, past, or future problems

Examples

- Discovering a useful article while browsing
- Learning new facts during casual reading
- Finding relevant data while searching for another topic
- Gaining insights through informal conversations
- Noticing information via notices or displays

2.18.3 Everyday Life Information Seeking – Savolainen

Reijo Savolainen emphasized the role of **social and cultural factors** in shaping everyday information practices. He argued that information source preferences are socially conditioned rather than purely individual.

Key Ideas

- Information seeking is embedded in daily life

- Source selection reflects social norms and habits
- Cultural context influences information use
- Information practices are routine and patterned

Examples

- Preferring the internet before libraries
- Relying on newspapers for daily updates
- Consulting peers before formal sources
- Habitual use of familiar platforms
- Community-influenced information choices

2.18.4 Professional Information Seeking – Leckie

Gloria J. Leckie proposed in 1996 that understanding **work roles and tasks** is essential to understanding professional information seeking. Her model was based on a meta-review of LIS and professional literature.

Key Ideas

- Information needs arise from work roles
- Tasks determine timing and type of information seeking
- Context of profession shapes behavior
- Seeking is task-driven rather than abstract

Examples

- Doctors seeking clinical guidelines
- Engineers consulting technical standards
- Lawyers researching case law
- Teachers preparing lectures
- Managers gathering decision-support data

2.18.5 Incidental Information Acquisition – Williamson

Kirsty Williamson highlighted in 1998 that information in everyday life is often **incidentally acquired** rather than intentionally sought, based on interviews with a large participant group.

Key Ideas

- Not all information seeking is purposeful
- Incidental acquisition plays a major role
- Everyday environments enable information flow
- Informal channels are significant

Examples

- Learning news through social interaction

- Gaining information via media exposure
- Discovering information during leisure activities
- Passive consumption of informational content
- Informal advice from acquaintances

2.18.6 Nonlinear Information Seeking – Foster

Allen Foster proposed a **nonlinear model** in 2004, challenging traditional stage-based models. His work was based on interdisciplinary academic research using naturalistic inquiry.

Key Ideas

- Information seeking is not strictly sequential
- Users move back and forth between stages
- Context and serendipity play key roles
- Behavior adapts dynamically

Examples

- Revisiting earlier sources after new findings
- Shifting between browsing and focused searching
- Combining multiple search strategies
- Iterative refinement of queries
- Flexible movement across information channels

2.18.7 Information Practices and Source Horizons – Savolainen

In 2008, Reijo Savolainen further developed the concept of information practices, emphasizing habitual knowledge stocks and information source horizons.

Key Ideas

- Users rely on accumulated knowledge
- Sources are ranked by preference
- Seeking follows habitual paths
- Evaluation of sources is contextual

Examples

- Checking the internet before visiting a library
- Using preferred news platforms
- Selecting trusted databases first
- Relying on familiar authors or journals
- Establishing personal information routines

2.18.8 Significance of Information Seeking Behavior Models

These models collectively enhance understanding of **how, why, and when** users seek information, enabling better design of information systems and services.

Significance

- Improves user-centered service design
- Supports effective reference services
- Guides information literacy instruction
- Enhances system usability
- Informs research in information science

Examples

- Training reference librarians
- Designing intuitive search systems
- Developing user education programmes
- Creating personalized information services
- Improving access and retrieval strategies

2.19 Wilson's Models of Information Seeking Behavior

T. D. Wilson proposed the earliest comprehensive models of information seeking behavior. These models explain how information seeking originates from a perceived need and how users interact with information sources, systems, and people during the search process.

2.19.1 Wilson's First Model of Information Seeking Behavior (1981)

Wilson's first model presents a **broad and linear depiction** of information seeking behavior. It explains how an information need gives rise to information seeking and searching activities.

Core Ideas

- Information seeking begins with a perceived information need
- Users approach formal and informal information sources
- The process may result in success or failure
- Successful searches lead to information use, exchange, and transfer
- Failure leads to repetition of the search process

Key Characteristics

- Emphasizes interaction with information systems
- Highlights social interaction and information exchange
- Shows information seeking as a cyclical process

Examples

- A researcher searching databases and sharing results

- A student consulting books and peers
- Repeating searches after unsatisfactory results
- Using retrieved information for study or research
- Exchanging information with colleagues

2.19.2 Wilson's Second Model of Information Seeking Behavior (1994)

Wilson revised his model in 1994 by integrating ideas from Ellis's model and introducing **psychological and contextual dimensions**.

Main Propositions

- Information need is a secondary need arising from basic needs
- Users face various barriers while seeking information
- Needs arise from personal, social, and environmental contexts
- Physiological, affective, and cognitive factors influence seeking

Key Characteristics

- Incorporates barriers such as personal, social, and environmental
- Explains why some information needs remain unmet
- Links motivation and stress with information seeking

Examples

- Time constraints limiting information search
- Lack of access to databases
- Emotional stress affecting search behavior
- Organizational restrictions on information use
- Cognitive limitations in framing queries

2.20 Dervin's Sense-Making Model

Brenda Dervin developed the Sense-Making approach in 1983. It is not merely a model but a **theoretical and methodological framework** to understand how individuals make sense of information in complex situations.

Core Elements

- Situation: the context in time and space where need arises
- Gap: the difference between current understanding and desired understanding
- Bridge: strategies used to cross the gap
- Outcome: sense made or problem resolved

Key Ideas

- Information behavior is a strategy to bridge gaps

- Users may seek, create, avoid, or share information
- Sense-making is continuous and contextual

Examples

- Seeking information to reduce uncertainty
- Creating new information to explain ideas
- Sharing information to influence others
- Avoiding information to ignore a problem
- Challenging accepted knowledge through research

2.21 Ellis's Model of Information Seeking Behavior

David Ellis proposed a feature-based model describing common activities undertaken during information seeking. The model is grounded in **empirical research**.

Features of the Model

- Starting: identifying initial sources and contacts
- Chaining: following references and citations
- Browsing: semi-directed scanning of sources
- Differentiating: filtering sources by quality and relevance
- Monitoring: keeping up-to-date with developments
- Extracting: selecting relevant information
- Verifying: checking accuracy and reliability
- Ending: completing the search process

Key Observations

- Starting initiates and Ending concludes the process
- Browsing, chaining, and monitoring are search procedures
- Differentiating is a filtering activity
- Extracting is an action on information sources
- Steps may occur in different sequences

Examples

- Following bibliographies in research articles
- Browsing journal contents
- Selecting high-quality sources
- Extracting key data from reports
- Verifying facts before use

2.22 Kuhlthau's Model of Information Seeking Behavior

Carol C. Kuhlthau proposed a **phenomenological model** emphasizing the emotional, cognitive, and behavioral aspects of information seeking.

Stages of the Model

- Initiation: recognizing the need, feeling uncertainty
- Selection: identifying a general topic, reduced anxiety
- Exploration: investigating the topic, confusion may occur
- Formulation: focusing the topic, clarity increases
- Collection: gathering relevant information, confidence grows
- Presentation: completing and presenting work
- Assessment: self-evaluation and reflection

Key Characteristics

- Emphasizes emotional changes during seeking
- Shows gradual refinement of the problem
- Information searching occurs throughout stages

Examples

- Students beginning a research assignment
- Gradual clarification of research focus
- Increasing confidence during information collection
- Presenting a final report or thesis
- Reflecting on learning outcomes

2.23 Nature of Information Seeking Behavior

The nature of information seeking behavior is **exploratory**, involving continuous interaction with information sources to bridge the gap between need and knowledge.

Key Characteristics

- Explorative and iterative
- Influenced by digital environments
- Involves multiple strategies and tools
- Dynamic rather than linear

Examples

- Exploring electronic databases
- Searching the World Wide Web
- Refining queries repeatedly

- Switching between sources and formats
- Combining print and digital resources

Unit.3 User Education

3.1 User Education

User studies conducted across different countries have consistently shown that only a small proportion of users make optimum use of libraries and bibliographical tools. Contrary to the belief that users intuitively learn how to use scientific and scholarly literature, studies have established that library use skills must be systematically taught. The need for formal training in the use of scientific information was officially recommended by the Royal Society Scientific Conference.

Surveys, including those reported by the Perry Committee in the United Kingdom, revealed that many undergraduate students were inactive users of academic libraries. These findings firmly established the necessity of user education programmes for effective utilization of library and information resources. The systematic imparting of such knowledge is commonly referred to as *user education*.

Key Points

- Library use skills are not intuitive
- Scientific and bibliographical tools require training
- Studies revealed low active use of libraries
- Formal user education programmes are essential
- User education supports effective resource sharing

Examples

- Training students in use of catalogues
- Teaching researchers' bibliographic databases
- Introducing users to indexing and abstracting tools
- Educating users about reference services
- Promoting effective use of electronic resources

3.2 Definition of User Education

User education may be defined as a process or programme through which potential users such as scientists, engineers, technologists, academics, and students are made aware of the value of information and are motivated to use information resources effectively.

Mews defined user education as instruction given to readers to help them make the best use of the library. Gordon Wright emphasized that library use cannot be taught in isolation but must be seen as a continuous educational process. Jacques Tocatline of UNESCO defined user education as any effort or programme that guides and instructs users with specific objectives.

Objectives of User Education

- Recognition of information needs
- Formulation of information needs
- Effective and efficient use of information services
- Assessment and evaluation of services

Examples

- Helping users identify their research needs
- Teaching users how to frame search queries
- Training users in database searching
- Evaluating usefulness of library services
- Encouraging critical use of information

3.3 Scope and Nature of User Education

User education is concerned with the entire information and communication process, including the total interaction of the user with the library. It should be a continuous process, beginning at school and public libraries and extending into academic and special libraries. User education is central to the core mission of libraries and the effective utilization of information resources.

The structure of many academic user education programmes follows the pattern proposed in 1948, consisting of:

- Introductory courses for new users
- Advanced courses focusing on subject literature

Examples

- Library orientation for new students
- Advanced literature search training for researchers
- Subject-based information literacy sessions
- Ongoing refresher programmes
- Discipline-specific user education

3.4 Components of User Education

Ideally, user education consists of two integrated components: **orientation** and **instruction**, combined according to user needs.

3.4.1 Orientation

Orientation focuses on introducing users to **general library usage**, services, organization, layout, and facilities. It addresses both cognitive objectives, such as understanding the library system, and affective objectives, such as developing positive attitudes towards the library.

Characteristics

- Creates a friendly and welcoming library image
- Encourages effective communication with library staff
- Builds user confidence in library services

Examples

- Guided library tours

- Introduction to library rules and services
- Familiarization with library layout
- Orientation lectures for new students
- Welcome sessions by librarians

3.4.2 Instruction (Bibliographic Instruction)

Instruction is concerned with learning how to use information resources effectively. It is also known as bibliographic instruction and focuses on information retrieval techniques and exploitation of information sources.

Instruction may be provided at two levels:

- Introductory level
- Advanced level

Examples

- Teaching use of OPAC and databases
- Training in indexing and abstracting tools
- Advanced literature search techniques
- Subject-specific bibliographic instruction
- Research-oriented information retrieval training

3.5 Practical Aspects of User Education

At a practical level, user education involves planning and organizing courses, including timing, group size, duration, and course content. Practical challenges include lack of guidance, excessive professional jargon, and weak integration with academic teaching.

Effective user education requires **close cooperation between librarians and faculty**, ensuring that library use becomes an integral and rewarding part of the learning process.

Examples

- Course-integrated library assignments
- Joint librarian–faculty teaching sessions
- Practical library-based exercises
- Embedded information literacy modules
- Continuous evaluation of programmes

3.6 Course-Integrated User Education

The concept of *course-integrated user education* emphasizes a close relationship between library programmes and academic curricula. This approach promotes independent learning supported by bibliographic guidance and faculty involvement.

A related concept is that of the *library college*, where students engage primarily in independent, library-based study, guided intellectually by faculty and supported by librarians.

Examples

- Library-based project work
- Independent study assignments
- Research-driven learning activities
- Bibliographically guided coursework
- Collaborative librarian–faculty instruction

3.7 Development of User Education

The development of user education has been systematically documented and progressively refined through research studies, bibliographies, institutional initiatives, and international programmes. Early surveys and bibliographic efforts established the scope and importance of user education, while later theoretical and practical initiatives helped it gain wide acceptance as an essential function of libraries.

Key Points

- User education has a well-documented historical foundation
- Early studies provided bibliographic control of the field
- Theory and practice evolved simultaneously
- Academic libraries played a major role in early development
- International organizations accelerated its global acceptance

Examples

- Surveys on library instruction practices
- Bibliographies on user education literature
- Academic library training programmes
- National and international seminars
- Policy-level recognition of user education

3.7.1 Pioneering Efforts in User Education

The systematic application of user education began with the pioneering work of Patricia B. Knapp. Her 1964 report focused on developing a strong relationship between library use and college teaching, sponsored by Monteith College of Wayne State University. Similar initiatives were undertaken at Earlham College.

During this phase, user education became closely associated with bibliographic instruction and course-related library instruction.

Components of Early Bibliographic Instruction

- Knowledge of reference sources
- Skills for effective use of bibliographic tools

Core Areas Covered

- General reference works

- Indexing and abstracting periodicals
- Library catalogues
- Principles of knowledge organization
- Search strategy formulation
- Subject analysis

Another significant contribution was made by **Louis Shores**, who introduced the concept of the *Library Arts College* in 1934, later known as the *Library College*. This concept emphasized **library-centred independent study**, supported by bibliographically skilled faculty. Along with Knapp, **Thomas G. Kirk** also played a key pioneering role.

Examples

- Course-related library instruction
- Independent study guided by library resources
- Shift from lecture-based to library-based learning
- Faculty–librarian collaboration
- Student-centred learning environments

3.7.2 Institutionalisation of User Education

The next major phase was the **institutionalisation of user education**, where organized bodies formally supported and funded user education initiatives.

In the United States, leadership was taken by:

- **Council on Library Resources**
- **Association of College and Research Libraries**

In the United Kingdom, significant impetus came from:

- **British Library Research and Development Department**
- Centre for Research in User Studies

This institutional patronage resulted in **coordinated planning, funding, and execution** of user education projects.

Examples

- Funded research projects on user education
- National-level planning of library instruction
- Development of training guidelines
- Evaluation of user education programmes
- Integration into academic library services

3.7.3 UNISIST Programme and User Education

User education gained international recognition through UNESCO under the UNISIST programme. While early user education focused mainly on academic institutions in developed countries, UNISIST emphasized its importance in less developed countries for national development.

In 1975, UNISIST launched the General Information Programme (PGI), which placed strong emphasis on user education.

UNISIST Objectives Related to User Education

- Training in use of existing information sources
- Obtaining user feedback on information services
- Involving a wide range of users in experimental services

The UNISIST seminars held at Bangkok and Rome in 1976 recognized user education as a **key component of national information policy**. The Rome Seminar recommended that user education policy should be integrated with national education policy.

Examples

- National user education policies
- Development-oriented information training
- User feedback mechanisms
- Experimental information services
- Policy-level integration of education and information

3.7.4 Conferences and International Initiatives

Several international conferences and seminars significantly contributed to the spread and refinement of user education.

Major Events

- Fourth Triennial Meeting of **IATUL**, Loughborough, 1970
- First International Conference on Library User Education, Cambridge, 1979
- Second International Conference, Oxford, 1981
- Anglo-Scandinavian Seminar, Gothenburg, 1976
- Workshops in Essen (Germany) and Melbourne (Australia), 1981
- Seminar on user education in the online age, Gothenburg, 1982

Examples

- Exchange of international best practices
- Focus on user education in different library types
- Emphasis on online and electronic environments
- Collaborative research and training
- Global dissemination of concepts

3.7.5 Growth of User Education Across Countries

Initially, user education developed mainly in English-speaking countries such as the USA, UK, Australia, and Canada. In later decades, it expanded rapidly in Scandinavia, other European countries, Japan, and China, where end-user training became particularly successful.

Examples

- Expansion of programmes in Scandinavian libraries
- European focus on systematic user training
- Japan's emphasis on user competence
- China's success in end-user training
- Adaptation to national educational needs

3.7.6 Development of User Education in India

In India, user education has seen **sporadic but significant initiatives**, though systematic institutionalisation remains limited.

Notable Contributions

- **INSDOC**, New Delhi
- **DRTC**
- **IASLIC**, Calcutta

IASLIC organized a national conference on User Education at Waltair in 1981. **IARI**, New Delhi, introduced a special course on library use and scientific writing. However, most efforts have been voluntary and non-systematic.

Examples

- Seminars and workshops on user education
- National conferences and proceedings
- Special training courses
- Awareness programmes
- Limited institutional frameworks

3.7.7 Comparative Perspective on User Education

Historically, three major streams of experience can be identified:

- The **American model**, characterized by innovation and decentralization
- The **UK model**, marked by centralized planning and coordination
- The **international model**, adapted to national contexts

While user education shares a global conceptual base, its **implementation varies according to local needs, policies, and educational systems**.

Examples

- Decentralized initiatives in the USA
- Centralized coordination in the UK
- Policy-driven programmes in developing countries
- Adaptation to cultural and educational contexts
- Diverse institutional strategies

3.8 Evaluation of a User Education Programme

Evaluation refers to the **systematic collection and analysis of information** about the effects of an educational course or programme. It involves comparing **observed outcomes** with **intended goals and expectations**. Understanding why evaluation is undertaken is essential to understanding what evaluation entails.

In the context of library user education, evaluation examines **inputs** (educational potential), **process variables** (teaching methods, media, organisation), and **outputs** (skills, attitudes, and use of resources). The fundamental purpose is to support **rational decision-making** and ensure the **economical and effective use** of library and information systems.

Key Points

- Evaluation compares outcomes with objectives
- Focuses on inputs, processes, and outputs
- Supports evidence-based decision-making
- Addresses effectiveness and efficiency
- Essential for improving user education programmes

Examples

- Measuring improvement in information skills
- Assessing attitudes towards library use
- Evaluating effectiveness of orientation sessions
- Analysing use of information resources
- Reviewing outcomes of instructional programmes

3.8.1 Scope of Evaluation

The scope of evaluation in user education can vary widely, from narrowly focused studies to broad system-level assessments.

Scope Includes

- Use of specific teaching methods or media
- Effects of individual instructional courses
- Impact of complete library instruction programmes
- Evaluation of general educational systems

Examples

- Comparing lecture-based and hands-on instruction
- Assessing a single bibliographic instruction session
- Reviewing an entire semester-long programme
- Evaluating institution-wide user education policies

3.8.2 Methods of Evaluation

Three principal methods are commonly used to evaluate user education programmes.

Psychometric Method

This method assumes that learning outcomes can be **measured objectively** by controlling variables and comparing experimental and control groups.

Characteristics

- Use of experimental and control groups
- Pre-tests and post-tests
- Measurement through achievement tests and attitude scales
- Focus on pre-specified objectives

Examples

- Testing information literacy before and after training
- Comparing new instructional methods with traditional ones
- Measuring changes in user confidence levels
- Analysing statistically significant performance differences
- Evaluating skill acquisition through standardized tests

Sociological or Management Method

This approach evaluates **organizational change** rather than individual learning outcomes. It focuses on how programmes affect structures, roles, and practices.

Characteristics

- Use of interviews and questionnaires
- No control group comparison
- Focus on organisational context
- Emphasis on perceptions and experiences

Examples

- Surveying staff views on user education effectiveness
- Interviewing users about service changes
- Studying impact on library workflows
- Assessing coordination between faculty and librarians

- Reviewing management outcomes of training initiatives

Illuminative or Responsive Method

This method, proposed by **Malcolm Parlett** and **David Hamilton**, allows for the identification of **unexpected outcomes**. The emphasis is on understanding how a programme operates in practice.

Characteristics

- Focus on actual implementation
- Attention to unintended effects
- Use of observation and exploratory interviews
- Descriptive rather than judgmental

Examples

- Observing user behaviour during training sessions
- Recording unanticipated learning outcomes
- Studying participant engagement levels
- Understanding conditions under which programmes succeed
- Exploring user experiences beyond test scores

3.8.3 Need for Evaluation of Library User Education

In recent years, librarians have increasingly recognized the importance of evaluating library instruction programmes. In 1976, Brewer and Hills emphasized that librarians should approach evaluation more professionally and take their teaching responsibilities seriously.

Despite growing awareness, systematic documentation of evaluation practices in user education remains limited. One notable example is the evaluation studies conducted at Chalmers University of Technology Library.

Importance of Evaluation

- Demonstrates value of user education programmes
- Identifies strengths and weaknesses
- Provides feedback for improvement
- Justifies allocation of resources
- Enhances programme effectiveness

Examples

- Revising instruction based on user feedback
- Improving course design after evaluation
- Strengthening weak instructional components
- Aligning programmes with user needs
- Ensuring continuous quality enhancement

3.9 User Education Techniques and Methods

User education techniques and methods refer to the planned approaches and instructional strategies adopted by libraries to educate users in the effective use of library resources, services, and information systems. The selection of appropriate techniques depends on user category, objectives of the programme, available resources, and institutional context. Effective user education is usually achieved through a combination of methods, rather than reliance on a single technique.

3.9.1 Orientation Techniques

Orientation techniques are designed mainly for **new users** to familiarize them with the library environment, services, and basic rules.

Key Features

- Introductory in nature
- Focus on awareness rather than deep skills
- Addresses cognitive and affective aspects
- Builds confidence and reduces library anxiety

Examples

- Library orientation lectures
- Guided library tours
- Freshers' induction programmes
- Introductory audio-visual presentations
- Distribution of library guides and brochures

3.9.2 Instructional Techniques

Instructional techniques aim at developing **practical skills** required for effective information retrieval and use. These are often referred to as **bibliographic instruction** techniques.

Key Features

- Skill-oriented and practice-based
- Focus on information retrieval tools
- Suitable for academic and research users
- May be introductory or advanced

Examples

- OPAC and database searching sessions
- Training in indexing and abstracting tools
- Instruction on classification and cataloguing use
- Literature search workshops
- Reference and citation training

3.9.3 Lecture Method

The lecture method is one of the **traditional techniques** used in user education, especially for large groups.

Key Features

- Economical in terms of time and resources
- Suitable for theoretical concepts
- Limited interaction with users
- Often combined with other methods

Examples

- Lectures on structure of scholarly literature
- Classroom sessions on library services
- Orientation talks for new students
- Theoretical explanation of information sources
- Awareness lectures on digital resources

3.9.4 Demonstration Method

Demonstration involves **showing the actual use** of tools, systems, or services to users.

Key Features

- Visual and practical approach
- Effective for learning search procedures
- Enhances understanding through observation
- Often followed by practice

Examples

- Live demonstration of database searching
- Showing OPAC search steps
- Demonstrating reference tools
- Explaining e-journal access
- Displaying citation management software

3.9.5 Hands-on Practice Method

Hands-on practice is based on the principle of **learning by doing** and is one of the most effective user education techniques.

Key Features

- User-centered and interactive
- Encourages active participation

- Improves confidence and retention
- Essential for online and digital resources

Examples

- Practice sessions on live databases
- Guided search exercises
- User-performed OPAC searches
- Trial searches under librarian supervision
- Practical assignments using library resources

3.9.6 Individual Instruction and Reference Guidance

This method focuses on **one-to-one interaction** between the librarian and the user.

Key Features

- Personalized and need-based
- Highly effective for complex queries
- Time-consuming but precise
- Suitable for researchers and advanced users

Examples

- Personal research consultations
- Reference desk guidance
- Help with thesis literature review
- Individual database search assistance
- Customized information support

3.9.7 Group Instruction and Workshops

Group-based instruction is suitable when users share **similar information needs or academic levels**.

Key Features

- Encourages peer learning
- Efficient for training multiple users
- Allows interaction and discussion
- Often theme or subject-based

Examples

- Subject-wise user education workshops
- Research methodology training sessions
- Group database training

- Faculty-oriented information literacy sessions
- Seminar-based instruction

3.9.8 Self-Instructional Methods

Self-instructional techniques allow users to learn **independently at their own pace**.

Key Features

- Flexible and user-controlled
- Reduces dependence on staff
- Useful for large user populations
- Supports lifelong learning

Examples

- Printed user manuals and handbooks
- Online tutorials and guides
- Video tutorials
- FAQs and help documents
- Web-based information literacy modules

3.9.9 Course-Integrated User Education

Course-integrated methods embed user education directly into the **academic curriculum**.

Key Features

- Strong librarian–faculty collaboration
- Contextual and assignment-based
- High relevance to user needs
- Improves learning outcomes

Examples

- Library instruction linked with assignments
- Bibliographic training within courses
- Research-based coursework support
- Embedded librarian programmes
- Credit-based information literacy courses

3.9.10 Use of Audio-Visual and ICT Tools

Modern user education increasingly uses **ICT-based and multimedia tools** to enhance effectiveness.

Key Features

- Engaging and interactive

- Suitable for digital-native users
- Supports blended learning
- Scalable and reusable

Examples

- PowerPoint-based instruction
- Recorded video tutorials
- Online webinars
- Learning management system integration
- Virtual library orientation sessions

3.9.11 Selection of Appropriate Methods

No single method is sufficient for all situations. Effective user education requires a **judicious mix of techniques**, based on user needs, objectives, cost, and infrastructure.

Examples

- Orientation plus hands-on training for new users
- Lectures combined with demonstrations
- Workshops followed by self-learning modules
- Individual guidance for advanced research users
- ICT-based tools supplemented by personal support

Unit. 4. User Studies

4.1 Methods and Techniques of Use Studies

Use studies are conducted to understand how library resources and services are actually used by different categories of users. Such studies help libraries evaluate strengths and weaknesses of services and support evidence-based planning and improvement. Methods used in social science research are widely applicable to library use and user studies. Use studies may be descriptive or prescriptive, depending on the purpose and situation.

According to Guha, methods of user studies can be broadly classified into general or conventional methods, indirect methods, and special or unconventional methods.

Major Classifications

- General or conventional methods
- Indirect methods
- Special and unconventional methods

Examples

- Studying user satisfaction
- Evaluating effectiveness of services
- Understanding reading habits
- Assessing resource utilization
- Improving collection development

4.2 General or Conventional Methods

These are the most used and direct methods for studying users and their information use.

Methods Included

- Questionnaire
- Interview
- Diary
- Observation

Examples

- Surveying users about library services
- Interviewing users on information needs
- Asking users to maintain usage diaries
- Observing user behavior in reading areas

4.3 Indirect Methods

Indirect methods rely on **existing data and records** without direct interaction with users.

Methods Included

- Library records analysis
- Citation analysis

Examples

- Studying circulation statistics
- Analyzing reference queries
- Examining citation patterns in research papers
- Evaluating journal usage

4.4 Special and Unconventional Methods

These methods make use of **technology-based tools** and advanced techniques.

Methods Included

- Computer feedback
- Internet browsing behavior analysis

Examples

- Online feedback forms
- Studying search logs
- Analyzing website usage
- Monitoring digital service utilization

4.5 Classification Based on Library Type

According to **P. S. G. Kumar**, user studies can also be classified based on the type of library, as user characteristics differ across libraries.

Library Types

- Public libraries
- Academic libraries
- Special libraries

Examples

- Leisure reading in public libraries
- Curriculum-based use in academic libraries
- Research-oriented use in special libraries

4.6 Classification Based on Orientation of Study

User studies may also be classified based on their focus.

Types

- User-oriented studies
- System-use oriented studies

- Utility-oriented studies

Examples

- Studying user satisfaction
- Analyzing system efficiency
- Measuring usefulness of services

Techniques of User Studies

4.7 Questionnaire Method

The questionnaire or social survey method is a **widely used technique** for collecting standardized empirical data from a large population or sample. Responses can be quantified and statistically analyzed.

According to **Ackroyd** and **Hughes**, surveys can be classified into three types.

Types of Surveys

- Factual surveys
- Attitude surveys
- Explanatory surveys

Modes of Questionnaires

- Self-administered
- Interviewer-administered
- Postal questionnaires
- Telephone questionnaires
- Email questionnaires

Advantages

- Economical
- Uniformity of questions
- Standardization

Examples

- User satisfaction surveys
- Opinion polls on library services
- Feedback questionnaires
- Online user surveys
- Assessment of information needs

4.8 Interview Method

Interviews are particularly useful for obtaining **in-depth and qualitative information**. They are flexible and allow probing into user experiences and perceptions.

Types of Interviews

- Face-to-face interviews
- Telephone interviews

Forms

- Structured
- Unstructured

Examples

- Interviews on user problems
- Researcher interviews on information needs
- Faculty interviews on resource adequacy
- User feedback discussions
- Service evaluation interviews

4.9 Diary Study Method

In diary studies, users are requested to **record their activities, experiences, and problems** while using library services. This method provides insights into real-life usage patterns.

Insights Gained

- Usage behavior
- Engagement paths
- Reading interests
- Habits and routines
- Unmet needs and frustrations

Examples

- Daily library use diaries
- Online activity logs maintained by users
- Reading habit records
- Service experience diaries
- Feedback during pilot services

4.10 Observation and Field Study

Observation involves systematic watching and listening to user behavior, often without interference. Field studies are conducted in **natural settings**, not controlled environments.

When Observation is Appropriate

- Need for direct information
- Understanding behavior and processes

- Examining physical evidence
- When other methods are unsuitable

Types of Observation

- Direct observation
- Indirect observation

Examples

- Observing reading room behavior
- Studying movement patterns in library spaces
- Field study of reference desk interactions
- Observing use of computers
- Studying user interaction with services

4.11 Analysis of Library Records

This internal and economical method involves analysis of **existing library records** without disturbing users.

Records Analyzed

- Issue and return records
- Visitor registers
- Reference section registers
- Interlibrary loan records
- Library website usage

Advantages

- Cost-effective
- No disruption to users
- Regular and continuous analysis

Examples

- Circulation trend analysis
- Reference service usage study
- ILL demand analysis
- Website hit analysis
- Section-wise use statistics

4.12 Computer Feedback

Computer feedback is a modern technique for collecting user responses through digital systems. **B. Jean Mandernach** identified several types of computer feedback.

Types of Computer Feedback

- No-feedback
- Knowledge-of-response feedback
- Knowledge-of-correct-response feedback
- Topic-contingent feedback
- Response-contingent feedback

Examples

- Online feedback forms
- Automated user response systems
- Digital service evaluation
- Feedback on new services
- Problem reporting systems

4.13 Citation Analysis

Citation analysis is an **indirect method** that studies patterns of references used in documents to assess importance and use.

Reveals

- Types and age of documents used
- Frequency of use
- Ranking of journals
- Ranking of authors and books
- Research impact

Uses

- Collection development
- Journal selection
- Measuring research impact
- Evaluating library effectiveness

Examples

- Analyzing citations in theses
- Identifying core journals
- Ranking frequently cited authors
- Studying subject-wise citation patterns
- Supporting acquisition decisions

4.14 Analysis of Computer Records

Modern libraries maintain extensive computerized records that provide valuable data for user studies.

Records Include

- User profiles
- Academic status
- Subject interests
- Circulation data
- Search behavior
- Equipment usage

Examples

- Studying user preferences
- Analyzing information-seeking behavior
- Reviewing service utilization
- Supporting collection policy decisions
- Monitoring system performance

4.15 Internet Browsing Pattern Analysis

With increased reliance on digital and online resources, studying **internet browsing behavior** of users has become essential.

Focus Areas

- Awareness of online resources
- Satisfaction with internet facilities
- Usage patterns and time spent
- Effectiveness of digital services

Methods

- Online surveys
- Offline questionnaires
- Server log analysis

Examples

- Website usage analysis
- Database access patterns
- Time-spent analysis
- User navigation behavior

- Evaluation of online services

4.16 Other Techniques of Use Studies

Apart from the commonly used methods of use and user studies, several **advanced and supportive techniques** are employed to gain deeper insight into user behaviour, service effectiveness, and system usability. These techniques are applied **as and when required**, depending on the nature of the service, users, and objectives of the study.

4.16.1 Functional Analysis

Functional analysis is a **decision-oriented technique** used to understand library services by breaking them into functional components such as circulation, reference service, information service, and documentation service. Each service may further be divided into sub-components to examine performance from the **user's point of view**.

Key Focus Areas

- Target user group
- Purpose of the service (new or existing)

Modes of Application

- With informed consent
- Without informed consent

Process

- Discussion of service functionality by staff or researchers
- Study of service performance from user perspective
- Communication of results regarding feasibility and effectiveness

Examples

- Evaluating a new circulation system
- Studying effectiveness of reference services
- Assessing documentation services
- Reviewing information desk operations

4.16.2 Empathic Modelling

Empathic modelling is based on the principle of **empathy**, where the researcher places themselves in the position of the user to understand real difficulties faced during library use. This technique provides a **quick and realistic impression** of user problems.

Key Characteristics

- Researcher acts as a user
- Direct understanding of service-related issues
- Avoids artificial data collection methods

Examples

- Experiencing problems in book issue/return
- Understanding difficulties in OPAC searching
- Identifying barriers in reference services
- Observing challenges in accessing digital resources

4.16.3 Scenario-Based Design

Scenario-based design is a **task-oriented technique** in which realistic stories or situations are created to study how users perform specific tasks within the library system.

Core Elements

- User
- Task goal
- Context or environment

Applications

- Studying information search behaviour
- Evaluating efficiency and effectiveness of services
- Analysing satisfaction and task completion

Examples

- Searching a book through catalogue
- Using online databases for information
- Repeating search when user is dissatisfied
- Evaluating end-to-end service workflow

4.16.4 Cognitive Walkthrough

The cognitive walkthrough method is used to identify **usability problems** in interactive systems, particularly for **first-time users**. It assumes that users prefer learning by exploration rather than reading manuals.

Key Evaluation Questions

- Will the user know what to do?
- Will the user notice the correct interface elements?
- Will the user understand system feedback?
- Will the user receive feedback after each action?

Applications

- New libraries
- Newly introduced services
- Digital interfaces and OPACs

Examples

- First-time OPAC use
- Navigation of library website
- Use of self-check kiosks
- Accessing e-resources

4.16.5 Heuristic Evaluation

Heuristic evaluation is an **informal usability inspection method** developed by **Jakob Nielsen** and **Rolf Molich** in 1990. It identifies potential failures from the user's perspective.

Basic Usability Heuristics

Heuristic Principle	Description
Simple and natural dialogue	Interface should be clear and uncluttered
User language	Use terminology familiar to users
Minimize memory load	Reduce need to remember information
Consistency	Similar actions should have similar responses
Feedback	System should inform users of actions
Shortcuts	Provide accelerators for experienced users
Clearly marked exits	Easy exit from unwanted states
Error prevention	Design to avoid errors
Good error messages	Errors should be clear and helpful

Key Requirements

- Skilled evaluators
- Minimum of three to five experts
- Direct interaction with system

Examples

- Evaluating library website usability
- Assessing digital library interfaces
- Reviewing web-based instruction programmes

4.16.6 Focus Groups

A focus group is a **guided group discussion** with users to explore perceptions, expectations, and experiences related to library services.

Purposes of Focus Groups

- Understanding complex user behaviour
- Exploring attitudes and opinions
- Identifying changes in behaviour
- Evaluating usefulness of services
- Supporting decision-making

Applications

- Usability testing of library websites
- Use of electronic resources
- Reference service evaluation
- Strategic planning inputs

Modes

- Offline focus groups
- Online focus groups

4.16.7 Workshops

Workshops bring together **users, experts, designers, and librarians** in a creative environment to discuss ideas, problems, and solutions related to library services.

Key Features

- Participatory and interactive
- Encourages creativity and collaboration
- Useful in design and development stages

Activities Involved

- Group discussions
- Idea generation
- Design critiques
- Prototype development

Examples

- Designing new library services
- Improving user interfaces
- Planning digital library initiatives
- Participatory system design

4.16.8 Longitudinal Studies

A longitudinal study involves **repeated observations or surveys** of the same users over a long period of time, without altering the study conditions except time.

Advantages

- Studies change and development over time
- Helps identify causal relationships
- Supports prediction of future trends

Key Benefits

- Analysis of duration of phenomena

- Measurement of behavioural changes
- Support for long-term planning

Examples

- Studying changing reading habits
- Tracking user satisfaction over years
- Monitoring digital resource usage trends
- Supporting collection development policy

4.17 How to Conduct a Use Study

A use study may be conducted by the library itself or through an external agency. The choice depends on library policy, objectives, and resources. Ethical considerations such as **informed consent, privacy, and data protection** are essential.

Step 1: Identify the Problem

The first step is to clearly identify the **problem or issue** to be investigated.

Examples

- User satisfaction levels
- Information-seeking behaviour
- Effectiveness of a new service
- Research support needs

4.18 Step 2: Setting Objectives

At this stage, the library defines **clear and specific objectives** for the study.

Examples

- Studying a single service issue
- Evaluating multiple services
- Setting priorities for improvement

4.19 Step 3: Selecting Suitable Technique(s)

The success of a use study depends heavily on selecting appropriate techniques.

Considerations

- Who will collect the data
- Area and location of study
- Qualitative or quantitative approach
- Data sources
- Timeframe

Data Sources

- Official records
- Surveys
- Focus groups and interviews
- Observational data

4.20 Step 4: Collecting Data

Data collection must be carefully implemented.

Key Points

- In-house or outsourced collection
- Selection of population or sample
- Ensuring maximum participation
- Protecting privacy
- Choosing suitable timing
- Pilot testing methods

4.21 Step 5: Analysing Data

Collected data must be **analysed and interpreted** to meet study objectives.

Examples

- Statistical analysis
- Qualitative interpretation
- Comparative analysis
- Trend identification

4.22 Step 6: Reporting

The final step is preparing a **comprehensive report** to support implementation and improvement.

Report Should Include

- Summary of findings
- Identification of gaps and barriers
- Suggested corrective measures
- Short-term and long-term goals
- Monitoring and evaluation plan
- Conclusions and recommendations

4.23 Conceptual Background of User Studies

Terms such as user studies, use studies, information-need studies, information transfer studies, communication behavior studies, information dissemination and utilization studies, and user research are closely related and

often overlap. There is no single universal definition, as these studies focus on different but interconnected aspects of how users interact with information systems.

The central purpose of all these studies is to understand information needs and information-seeking behavior, so that libraries and information centres can design effective, relevant, and high-quality services.

Key Points

- Concepts are interrelated and overlapping
- No universally accepted definition exists
- Focus is on understanding users and their behavior
- Supports improvement of library services

Examples

- Studying user information needs
- Analysing information-seeking behavior
- Examining communication patterns
- Evaluating information use and dissemination
- Improving service quality

4.24 Limitations of Use and User Studies

Despite their importance, use and user studies have several limitations.

Major Limitations

- Do not always reveal the effects of information use
- Indirect and unrecorded use may remain unnoticed
- Productive interactions with libraries may not be captured
- Use and usefulness are not always the same

Use–Utility Relationship

Situation	Description
Used but not useful	Library is used, but does not satisfy needs
Useful but not used	Library has value, but users do not access it
Neither used nor useful	Library fails in both access and relevance
Used and useful	Ideal situation

Examples

- High footfall but low satisfaction
- Valuable databases with low awareness
- Well-designed services ignored by users
- Optimal use with high user benefit

Evolution of User Studies

User studies constitute one of the **most researched areas in Library and Information Science**. Their evolution reflects changes in science, technology, communication media, and user behavior.

4.25 Early Focus of User Studies (Before 1930s)

Early user studies mainly focused on **scientists and technologists**, particularly in fields such as biochemistry, medicine, engineering, and physics. These disciplines had more developed publication systems compared to the humanities.

Examples

- Scientific literature use
- Technical documentation studies
- Research communication in sciences

4.26 User Studies in the 1930s

The earliest reference in LIS literature is attributed to **L. R. Wilson** in the **late 1930s**. His study examined the **distribution and status of libraries in the USA**, not direct library use.

Significance

- Institutional-level analysis
- Not focused on user behavior

4.27 User Studies in the 1940s

A major milestone occurred in **1948** at the **Royal Society Scientific Conference**.

Key contributors included **Donald J. Urquhart** and **J. D. Bernal**.

Urquhart's **1948** study examined:

- Distribution of scientific information
- Purpose of consulting borrowed literature
- Usefulness of documents
- Relationship with year and form of publication

4.28 User Studies in the 1950s

The **1950s** marked formal recognition of **information needs** as a research area.

Key Events

- International Conference on Scientific Information, Washington, **1958**
- Bernal's paper *"The Transmission of Scientific Information: A User's Analysis"*

A landmark pilot study was conducted by **R. R. Shaw** in **1956** for the **National Science Foundation**.

4.29 User Studies in the 1960s

The **1960s** saw rapid growth in user studies.

Key Developments

- **1963–1969**: **American Psychological Association** conducted large-scale studies on psychologists

- **1964**: Two major bibliographies published, listing **438** and **676** studies
- **1966**: Menzel reviewed user studies in *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology*

Notable Contribution

- Davis and Bail compiled a bibliography of **438 studies in 1964**

4.30 User Studies in the 1970s

The **1970s** expanded user studies beyond scientists to include **diverse user groups** such as magistrates, urban citizens, and university students.

Major Trends

- Evaluation of information systems
- Focus on efficiency and effectiveness
- Recognition of methodological weaknesses

Key Publications

- Crane (**1971**)
- Martyn (**1974**)
- Crawford (**1978**)

By **1977**, more than **1000 significant user studies** had been conducted.

A landmark event was the establishment of the **Centre for Research on User Studies (CRUS)** in **1975** by the **British Library** at the **University of Sheffield**.

4.31 User Studies in the 1980s

The **1980s** emphasized **conceptual frameworks and methodological rigor**.

Key Contributions

- **Nicholas J. Belkin** proposed the **ASK (Anomalous State of Knowledge) theory in 1980**
- **Carol C. Kuhlthau** conducted a landmark study in **1988** on students' information search process

Year Highlights

- 1980
- 1988

4.32 User Studies in the 1990s

The **1990s** were dominated by the **Internet as a major information provider**.

Key Studies

- **1993**: Tillman et al. studied internet use as a reference tool
- **1996**: Eager and Oppenheim examined academic information needs using shadowing
- **1996–1997**: Abels et al. and Liebscher et al. studied adoption of electronic networks

Factors Identified

- Accessibility
- Ease of use
- Discipline and task
- Perceived utility

4.33 User Studies in the 2000s

In the **2000s**, user studies focused on **evidence-based librarianship and digital environments**.

Major Contributions

- **Barbara M. Wildemuth**, **2003**: Emphasized empirical evidence in librarianship
- **David Carr**, **2006**: Highlighted user-centered hybrid libraries
- **Varghese**, **2008**: Reviewed **101 electronic-environment user studies**

4.34 Summary of Evolution of User Studies

Decade	Key Focus	Major Milestones
1930s	Library systems	L. R. Wilson
1940s	Scientific information use	Royal Society Conference 1948
1950s	Information needs	Shaw 1956, Washington Conference 1958
1960s	Growth and bibliographies	APA studies, ARIST
1970s	Systems and evaluation	CRUS 1975
1980s	Conceptual frameworks	Belkin 1980, Kuhlthau 1988
1990s	Internet impact	Network and adoption studies
2000s	Digital and evidence-based	Wildemuth 2003, Varghese 2008

Unit 5. User Orientation Programmes

5.1 User Orientation in Libraries

The library is a central component of the education and learning process. Its effectiveness and relevance depend largely on how well its resources and services are used by different categories of users such as students, researchers, teachers, and the public. User orientation aims at promoting and maximizing the use of library resources by enabling users to understand the library system and interact effectively with it.

User orientation is fundamental to the information and communication process of a library. It emphasizes complete interaction between users and the library, ensuring that information resources are not only available but also accessible, understandable, and usable.

Key Focus

- Promoting maximum use of library resources
- Effective utilization of information services
- Strengthening interaction between users and the library
- Supporting independent and lifelong learning

Examples

- Orientation programmes for new students
- Familiarization with library layout and services
- Introduction to print and electronic resources
- Awareness sessions on reference services
- Guidance on independent information searching

5.2 Meaning and Definition of User Orientation

User orientation is closely related to the broader concept of **user education**, focusing primarily on introducing users to library resources, services, and methods of use.

- **Mews (1992)** defined user education as *instruction given to readers to help them make the best use of a library*.
- **Fleming (1990)** described it as programmes of instruction, education, and exploration provided by libraries to enable users to make **effective, efficient, and independent** use of information sources and services.
- **Sewa Singh** defined it as any formal or informal effort that guides users in recognizing and formulating information needs, using information services efficiently, and assessing source materials.

These definitions emphasize that user orientation is not merely instructional but also **developmental**, helping users become confident and self-reliant information seekers.

Examples

- Teaching users how to identify their information needs
- Explaining differences between books, journals, and databases
- Guiding users in evaluating information sources

- Training users in efficient search techniques
- Encouraging independent use of library services

5.3 Importance of User Orientation

It is widely accepted that learners become more intellectually active when they focus on **how to find knowledge** rather than merely memorizing information. In the contemporary information society, the ability to use information effectively is a **critical skill** that will remain important in the future.

User orientation teaches users how to make the **best possible use of a library system**. It encompasses activities designed to help students, researchers, and teachers become **efficient, independent, and lifelong learners**.

Core Outcomes

- Ability to judge the value of information sources
- Development of independent learning skills
- Skill in retrieving information from diverse resources
- Promotion of lifelong learning habits

Examples

- Evaluating relevance of books and journals
- Independent database searching
- Effective use of reference tools
- Critical assessment of online information
- Continuous self-directed learning

5.4 Role of Libraries and Policy Support

The **American Library Association** emphasized the responsibility of all types of libraries to provide user education. Its policy statement clearly states that libraries must support users in understanding the organization of knowledge and locating information successfully, with the same level of administrative, financial, and staffing support as traditional library programmes.

This policy underscores that user orientation is not optional but a **core responsibility of libraries**.

Examples

- Institutional support for orientation programmes
- Dedicated staff for user education
- Budget allocation for training resources
- Integration of orientation into library planning
- Continuous assessment of user education initiatives

5.5 Librarian as Educator

The importance of user orientation has also been strongly advocated by **Otis Robinson**, who emphasized that a librarian should function as an **educator**, not merely as a custodian of books. He argued that empowering students to become self-reliant investigators is one of the greatest achievements of education.

This perspective reinforces the educational role of librarians in shaping **information-literate users**.

Examples

- Librarians guiding research projects
- Teaching effective use of catalogues and databases
- Supporting students in independent inquiry
- Encouraging analytical and critical thinking
- Mentoring users in advanced information skills

5.6 Nature and Scope of User Orientation

The essence of user orientation lies in imparting education that enables users to utilize library resources **efficiently, effectively, and independently** to achieve academic and personal goals. User orientation should be a **continuous process**, beginning in school and public libraries and extending to academic and special libraries.

Scope of User Orientation

Area	Description
Resources	Print, electronic, and special collections
Services	Circulation, reference, digital access
Organization	Classification, cataloguing, layout
Special Facilities	Databases, archives, special collections

Examples

- Orientation in school libraries
- Induction programmes in universities
- Advanced orientation for research scholars
- Special orientation for digital resources
- Continuous refresher programmes

5.7 Points to Remember

User orientation plays a crucial role in ensuring the **optimal use of library resources and services**.

Key Points

- User orientation educates users on effective library use
- Users must be informed about resources, services, and techniques
- Knowledge of library layout and organization is essential
- Users should understand retrieval from print and online sources

- Awareness of special collections and services is necessary

Examples

- Knowing library location and sections
- Understanding classification and shelving
- Retrieving information from books and journals
- Using online databases and OPACs
- Identifying special collections and services

5.8 Need for User Education

User education is essential due to several **academic, technological, and informational factors** that directly influence how users interact with library resources and services.

5.8.1 Current Trends in Education

Modern education strongly emphasizes **self-learning and lifelong learning**. There is a widespread assumption that users are naturally capable of locating and retrieving information independently. In practice, however, users **require systematic training** to use information resources effectively and efficiently.

Key Points

- Shift towards self-directed learning
- Growing importance of lifelong learning
- Users need structured guidance to use resources

Examples

- Independent project-based learning
- Self-guided research assignments
- Continuous professional development
- Learning beyond formal classrooms
- Autonomous information searching

5.8.2 Emergence of Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Subjects

Contemporary research increasingly transcends traditional subject boundaries. Fields such as **chemical engineering, mathematical engineering, and bioinformatics** require users to consult information sources across multiple disciplines. Without proper training, users are unable to make **optimum use of diverse resources**.

Key Points

- Blurring of disciplinary boundaries
- Multidimensional research requirements
- Need for cross-database and cross-subject searching

Examples

- Searching engineering and mathematics databases together
- Consulting medical and social science literature
- Using interdisciplinary journals
- Integrating data from multiple subject domains
- Conducting holistic literature reviews

5.8.3 Availability of Online Resources

Libraries now subscribe to a wide range of **online databases, e-journals, and e-books** in addition to print resources. Users must be educated about:

- What resources are available
- How to access them
- How to retrieve information remotely

Key Points

- Growth of digital collections
- On-campus and off-campus access
- Need for technical and search skills

Examples

- Accessing e-journals through library portals
- Using institutional logins for remote access
- Searching subscribed databases
- Downloading e-books
- Using discovery tools

5.8.4 Miscellaneous Services Offered by the Library

Libraries provide a variety of **support services** to facilitate learning. Merely offering these services is insufficient; users must be **informed, guided, and motivated** to use them.

Common Library Services

Service	Purpose
OPAC	Searching library holdings
Lending	Borrowing materials
Photocopying / Printing	Reproduction of documents
Reference Service	Answering information queries
Interlibrary Loan	Access to external resources
Internet Browsing	Online information access
New Arrivals Service	Awareness of latest resources
Institutional Memberships	Resource sharing

Examples

- Teaching OPAC search techniques
- Explaining borrowing rules
- Promoting reference desk services
- Encouraging use of ILL
- Informing users about new arrivals

5.8.5 Information Overload

Rapid growth in research and publication has resulted in **information overload**. Availability of large volumes of information can create confusion rather than clarity. User education helps users locate **the right information at the right time**.

Key Points

- Information deluge across disciplines
- Difficulty in filtering relevant information
- Need for critical evaluation skills

Examples

- Selecting authoritative sources
- Distinguishing scholarly from non-scholarly content
- Filtering search results
- Evaluating credibility of online information
- Using advanced search strategies

5.9 Objectives of User Education

User education aims to transform **naïve users into self-dependent users** capable of making effective use of library and information resources for lifelong learning.

Major Objectives

- To create awareness of library resources and services
- To bridge the gap between users and library collections
- To enhance users' ability to select appropriate information sources
- To instruct users in effective and judicious use of resources
- To develop information access and retrieval skills

Examples

- Awareness sessions on databases
- Training in source evaluation
- Teaching search strategies
- Promoting independent learning

- Developing information literacy skills

5.10 Library Orientation

According to **Fjällbrant** and **Malley**, user education consists of two closely related components: **orientation** and **instruction**.

- **Orientation** introduces users to general library usage, services, organization, layout, and facilities.
- **Instruction** focuses on subject-specific use of information resources.

Orientation means adjusting users to their library environment, particularly **new users** who may feel confused or intimidated by the complexity and size of libraries.

Examples

- First-time library induction
- Introduction to layout and sections
- Familiarization with services
- Reducing library anxiety
- Creating a user-friendly environment

5.11 Process of Library Orientation

Library staff typically follow a systematic process to orient users effectively.

Steps in Library Orientation

- Explaining library hours, rules, and borrowing limits
- Conducting guided library tours
- Introducing key library staff
- Explaining different collections
- Demonstrating use of catalogue or OPAC
- Informing users about available services
- Distributing brochures and guides

Examples

- Guided tours for new students
- OPAC demonstrations
- Staff introduction sessions
- Collection awareness programmes
- Distribution of library handbooks

5.12 Methods and Media of User Orientation

User orientation can be delivered using various **methods and media**, categorized based on their instructional utility.

Categories of Methods and Media

Instruction Type	Methods and Media
Group Instruction	Lectures, seminars, tutorials, demonstrations, guided tours
Group & Individual Instruction	Films, video tapes, slides, audio materials
Individual Instruction	Printed guides, books, exercises, programmed instruction, self-learning material

Presently, **pamphlets and PowerPoint presentations** are widely used in user orientation programmes.

Examples

- Orientation lectures
- Guided library tours
- Printed library guides
- Multimedia presentations
- Hands-on demonstrations

5.13 Different Levels of User Orientation

User orientation programmes should be tailored according to **user level and academic status**.

Levels of User Orientation

User Category	Orientation Focus
New Users	General library introduction
Undergraduate Students	Sections, catalogue, reference sources
Postgraduate Students	Classification, bibliographies, advanced services
Researchers and Teachers	Literature search, bibliography, ILL, technical writing

Examples

- Freshers' orientation programmes
- UG-level catalogue training
- PG-level bibliographic instruction
- Research-oriented database training
- Faculty-focused advanced information services

5.14 User Orientation in Different Libraries

Libraries are an integral part of the **education system at all levels**—elementary, secondary, and higher education. As service institutions, libraries supplement teaching and learning by **acquiring, processing, organizing, and disseminating information**. Their central aim is to attract users and enable them to explore and navigate the world of knowledge.

User orientation programmes are designed to **inform, communicate, and familiarize users** with library sources, services, and techniques. Only after acquiring adequate library skills can users make **optimum use** of library resources and services. Hence, different types of libraries organize **customized user orientation programmes** according to the needs of their respective user groups.

Examples

- Orientation programmes for school students
- Induction sessions in colleges and universities
- Specialized orientation in research libraries
- User training in public libraries
- Service awareness programmes in special libraries

5.15 User Orientation in a School Library

Fig. School Library Orientation

School libraries play a crucial role in **supporting classroom teaching** and developing lifelong learning habits among students. User orientation in school libraries introduces students to the **basic structure, resources, and services** of the library and helps them acquire essential information skills.

According to **James E. Herring (1988)**, the objectives of a school library clearly highlight the importance of early user orientation.

5.15.1 Objectives of a School Library

The main objectives of a school library are:

- To supplement classroom teaching through additional reading
- To equip students with effective learning skills using varied materials

- To develop reading habits for pleasure and information
- To nurture an inquiring mind for lifelong library use

Examples

- Supporting textbook learning with reference books
- Encouraging leisure reading habits
- Promoting independent information searching
- Preparing students for higher education libraries

5.15.2 Need for User Orientation in School Libraries

User orientation is essential in school libraries because students are future users of **academic and public libraries**. Adequate training at the school level ensures that students can later use libraries confidently for education, employment, business, and recreation.

A **well-planned and documented orientation programme** helps students understand:

- What the library offers
- How to exploit its resources effectively
- How to apply information skills beyond school life

Examples

- Transition from school to college libraries
- Use of public libraries after schooling
- Independent information use for careers
- Lifelong learning through libraries

5.15.3 Objectives of User Education in School Libraries

User education in school libraries aims to teach students how to:

- Use catalogues and reference books
- Identify their information needs
- Initiate and plan a search process
- Identify appropriate information sources
- Extract, organize, and present information
- Retrieve information from the Internet
- Give proper attribution and avoid plagiarism

Examples

- Searching books through catalogue
- Using encyclopedias and dictionaries
- Planning project work searches

- Organizing information for assignments
- Learning ethical use of information

5.15.4 Information Skills for School Students (Marland Model)

Michael Marland proposed a structured set of information skills that should be imparted to school students.

Step	Information Skill
1	What do I need to do? – Formulating the need
2	Where could I go? – Identifying possible sources
3	How do I get the information? – Locating sources
4	Which sources shall I use? – Selecting sources
5	How shall I use the sources? – Interrogating sources
6	What should I record? – Recording information
7	Have I got the information I need? – Evaluating
8	How should I present it? – Presentation
9	What have I achieved? – Self-evaluation

Examples

- Planning project topics
- Selecting suitable books or websites
- Evaluating relevance of information
- Presenting assignments effectively

5.15.5 Methods of Instruction in School Library Orientation

User orientation in school libraries is generally conducted using **simple, engaging, and age-appropriate methods**.

Common Methods

- Lectures and talks
- Audio-visual aids
- Pamphlets and printed guides
- Guided library tours
- PowerPoint presentations
- Combination of multiple methods

Examples

- Guided tour for new students
- Demonstration of catalogue use
- Audio-visual orientation sessions
- Distribution of library handbooks
- Interactive orientation classes

5.16 User Orientation in a University / College Library

A university or college library must **regularly organize user orientation and information literacy programmes** for students, research scholars, and teachers. Such programmes are essential to ensure effective use of **print, digital, and online resources**. Before conducting any user education programme, **systematic planning** is required, including clear definition of objectives, content, methods, venue, and documentation.

5.16.1 Planning of User Orientation Programme

Proper planning is the foundation of a successful user education programme.

Planning Should Include

- Identification of target users (UG, PG, researchers, teachers)
- Clear objectives of the programme
- Selection of appropriate content
- Choice of teaching methods
- Venue and duration of the programme
- Documentation and evaluation

Examples

- Orientation for first-year undergraduate students
- Advanced training for research scholars
- Faculty-oriented database training
- Department-wise orientation sessions
- Refresher programmes for existing users

5.16.2 Elements of User Education Programme

A university/college library user education programme generally consists of two major elements.

a) Library Orientation

Library orientation includes all activities related to introducing users to:

- Library layout and organization
- Physical and digital collections
- Rules, regulations, and services
- OPAC and access points

Examples

- Guided library tours
- Introduction to circulation and reference sections
- Familiarization with reading rooms and digital labs
- Awareness of special collections

b) Information Literacy Competency Programme

This programme focuses on developing **advanced information handling skills** required for academic and research work.

5.16.3 Objectives of Information Literacy Competency Programme

The objectives should be **clearly defined** and tailored to the intended audience. The programme aims:

- To familiarize users with the **potential of the Internet**
- To demonstrate retrieval of information from **subscribed databases**
- To train users to **download, save, and manage full-text content**
- To teach storage and organization of **citations and references**
- To explain the use of **Boolean operators**
- To teach correct citation of **online full-text articles**
- To create awareness about **subscribed e-books and databases**
- To inform users about **Open Educational Resources (OER)**
- To teach evaluation of information using parameters such as **currency, authority, scope, and relevance**
- To educate users on **citation styles, IPR issues**, and **plagiarism avoidance**

Examples

- Using Scopus or Web of Science for literature review
- Evaluating journal credibility
- Managing references using citation tools
- Avoiding plagiarism in assignments

- Ethical use of digital information

5.16.4 Methods of Instruction

Information literacy programmes in university libraries are conducted using **multiple instructional methods** to ensure effectiveness.

Common Methods

- Lectures and seminars
- Audio-visual aids
- PowerPoint presentations
- Web 2.0 tools
- Printed pamphlets and guides

Examples

- Database search demonstrations
- Hands-on training sessions
- Interactive seminars
- Online tutorials and guides
- Blended learning approaches

5.16.5 Venue of the Programme

The venue plays an important role in ensuring **effective interaction and learning**.

Possible Venues

- Classrooms in academic departments
- Library computer laboratories
- Digital learning centres

Best Practice

- Training should be conducted in **small groups of 20–25 students**
- Ensures better interaction and personalized guidance

Examples

- Department-wise classroom sessions
- Database training in library labs
- Special sessions for research scholars

5.16.6 Content and Presentation of the Programme

Presentations should clearly explain **how the library supports teaching, learning, and research**.

Presentation Should Cover

- Physical and digital collections
- Library services and facilities
- Features of different databases
- Search techniques with live demonstrations

Search Techniques to be Explained

Search Technique	Purpose
Basic and Advanced Search	Simple and refined searching
Phrase Searching	Exact phrase retrieval
Proximity Searching	Terms appearing near each other
Boolean Operators	AND, OR, NOT logic
Field Searching	Author, title, subject search
Controlled Vocabulary	Standardized subject terms
Narrowing Results	Filtering and refining search

Examples

- Conducting literature search for dissertations
- Searching databases for essay writing
- Refining search results using filters
- Using controlled vocabulary for accuracy

5.16.7 User Interaction and Query Handling

The programme should be **interactive**. Library staff must encourage users to ask questions and clarify doubts.

Key Focus

- Demonstration followed by practice
- Query resolution
- Application-based learning

Examples

- Answering database-related queries
- Explaining access problems
- Demonstrating search corrections
- Guiding students in research tasks

5.16.8 Activity: Orientation Programme for First-Year Undergraduate Students

Situation
You are working in a university library and are asked to prepare an orientation programme for first-year undergraduate students.

Suggested Approach

- Plan a brief introductory lecture

- Conduct a guided library tour
- Demonstrate OPAC and basic databases
- Explain borrowing rules and services
- Distribute library guides and brochures
- Allow time for interaction and questions

Examples

- Freshers' induction programme
- OPAC search demonstration
- Introduction to reference services
- Awareness of digital resources
- Encouraging independent library use

5.17 Conventional and Modern Techniques of User Orientation

Libraries employ a **blend of conventional and modern techniques** to orient users effectively. These techniques aim to create awareness, enhance understanding, and promote independent use of library resources and services. The choice of technique depends on **user type, infrastructure, scale of users, and objectives of the programme**.

5.17.1 Conventional Techniques of User Orientation

Conventional techniques are **traditional, print-based, and face-to-face methods** that have long been used in libraries. They remain relevant, especially for first-time users and institutions with limited technological infrastructure.

a) Study Tour

A study tour involves **guided visits** to the library or other libraries to familiarize users with layout, collections, and services.

Purpose

- Physical familiarity with library environment
- Practical exposure to resources and services

Examples

- Guided tour for new students
- Visit to a central or university library
- Orientation walk-through of sections
- Exposure to special collections
- Demonstration of service points

b) Newsletters

Newsletters are **periodic publications** that communicate updates and developments to users.

Purpose

- Current awareness
- Promotion of services and resources

Examples

- Information on new arrivals
- Announcements of new services
- Library events and workshops
- Changes in library timings
- User education tips

c) Handbooks

Library handbooks provide **comprehensive and structured information** about library rules, resources, and services.

Purpose

- Ready reference guide for users
- Standardized information source

Examples

- Library rules and regulations
- Membership procedures
- Classification and arrangement details
- Service descriptions
- Contact details of staff

d) Leaflets and Pamphlets

Leaflets are **brief, focused printed materials** distributed during orientation programmes.

Purpose

- Quick dissemination of essential information
- Easy recall for users

Examples

- OPAC usage guide
- Borrowing rules leaflet
- Database access pamphlet
- Orientation checklist
- Help-desk information sheet

5.17.2 Modern Techniques of User Orientation

Modern techniques rely on **digital, multimedia, and web-based tools**, making orientation more interactive, scalable, and user-friendly.

a) PowerPoint Presentations

PowerPoint presentations are widely used for **structured and visual orientation sessions**.

Purpose

- Visual explanation of services and resources
- Effective for group instruction

Examples

- Library induction presentations
- Database search demonstrations
- Information literacy training slides
- Research support orientation
- Digital resource awareness sessions

b) Library Websites

Library websites act as **24×7 orientation platforms**, providing continuous access to information.

Purpose

- Self-learning and remote orientation
- Centralized access to services and resources

Examples

- Library rules and services pages
- Online tutorials and guides
- Database and e-resource links
- FAQs and help sections
- Virtual library tours

c) Other Digital Tools

Modern libraries also use additional digital tools for orientation.

Examples

- Online videos and tutorials
- Webinars and virtual orientations
- Learning Management System integration
- Email alerts and notifications

- Social media updates

5.17.3 Comparative View of Conventional and Modern Techniques

Aspect	Conventional Techniques	Modern Techniques
Nature	Print-based, physical	Digital, online
Accessibility	Limited to library hours	24×7 access
User Reach	Small to medium groups	Large and remote users
Interaction	Face-to-face	Multimedia and virtual
Cost	Low recurring cost	Initial setup cost

5.17.4 Significance of Combining Both Techniques

An effective user orientation programme should adopt a **hybrid approach**, combining both conventional and modern techniques to suit diverse user needs.

Examples

- Study tour supported by PPT presentation
- Handbook supplemented with website guides
- Leaflets reinforced by online tutorials
- Newsletter updates linked to website content
- Classroom orientation followed by virtual support

----------END----------